

8

Transportation

8.1 Functional Roadway Classification System

The Metropolitan Council functional classification system consists of four classes of roadways; principal arterials, minor arterials, collector streets, and local streets.

Principal Arterial

The principal arterial system is the foremost element in the roadway network. Principal arterials will be provided as a continuous system within the Metropolitan Area. They are used to connect the sub-regions in the Urban Service Area with each other; and to connect both the Urban Service Area and the Rural Service Area with the Metropolitan Centers. They also connect the Metro Area to outstate centers. Principal arterials may be connected on a selected basis only. Principal arterials should not connect to collectors or local streets. In all cases, they should be designed as fully controlled access facilities. This means that connections with other roadways within the Urban Service Area should be only at grade-separated interchanges and land access should not be provided between these points. Within the Rural Service Area, intersections may be controlled, at grade intersections.

- **T.H. 52 (Lafayette Freeway)** is a 4-lane divided freeway at the east edge of West Saint Paul. It has concrete pavement, paved shoulders and fully controlled access. Interchanges are located at Butler, Thompson/Wentworth and Mendota Road.
- **I-494** is a 4-lane divided freeway with concrete pavement, paved shoulders and fully controlled access. Although it is not technically in the City limits of West Saint Paul, due its close proximity, it is used by many West Saint Paul residents and employees for regional mobility.

Minor Arterials

The minor arterial system complements and supports the principal system, but is primarily oriented toward travel within and between adjacent subregions. Minor arterials are generally spaced from one half mile to two miles apart and typically are two to four lane streets with signals or stop signs at major intersections. Minor arterials are primarily oriented toward the provision of sub-metropolitan mobility and any land



access should be oriented to public streets and major traffic generators. Single family driveways onto minor arterials should be strongly discouraged. Minor arterials are generally not to be continuous across two or more subregions. These roadways are classified into the following sub-groups:

1. **Relievers:** Minor arterials that provide direct relief for traffic on major metropolitan highways. These roads include the closest routes parallel to the principal arterials within the urban and transitional areas. These roadways are proposed to accommodate medium length trips (less than eight miles) as well as providing relief to congested principal arterials. Improvements focus on providing additional capacity for through traffic.
 2. **Expanders:** Routes that provide a way to make connections between developing areas outside the interstate ring or beltway. These routes are located circumferentially beyond the area reasonably served by the beltway. These roadways are proposed to serve medium to long suburb to suburb trips. Improvements focus on preserving or obtaining right-of-way.
 3. **Connectors:** This subgroup of “A” minor arterials are those that would provide good, safe connections among the town centers in the transitional and rural areas within and near the seven counties. Improvements focus on safety and load-carrying capacity.
 4. **Augmenters:** The fourth group of “A” minor arterials are those that roads that augment principal arterials within the interstate ring or beltway. The principal arterial network in this area is in place. However, the network of principal arterials serving the City is not in all cases sufficient relative to the density of development that network serves. In these situations, these key minor arterials serve many long-range trips. Improvements focus on providing additional capacity for through traffic.
- **Trunk Highway 110**, located at the southwest edge of West Saint Paul, is classified as a Minor Arterial. It is a 4-lane divided highway with bituminous surfacing and shoulders. It is a partially controlled access roadway with at-grade intersections.
 - **Robert Street** serves as the north-south transportation spine of the City. Due to its dual function as a business street and a thoroughfare, traffic safety and congestion are serious problems. Its role as the “Main Street” of West Saint Paul has elevated its redevelopment as a priority issue for the City.

The City has adopted the *"Redevelopment Design Framework: A strategy for South Robert Street's Renaissance"* in 2000. The City also implemented significant zoning ordinance changes to spur redevelopment and investment in the Robert Street Corridor. These ordinance changes allowed for larger building areas with reduced setbacks, and required stricter building façade and sign aesthetic standards. The City has also recently adopted a new Gateway North Mixed-Use District along Robert Street between Annapolis Street and Butler Avenue. The district is designed as a mixed-use district allowing both commercial and residential uses with design standards to establish the identity of the area as a "gateway" entrance to the City.

As the Plan proceeds, the City Council will continue working with Mn/DOT and the community, utilizing a variety of sources and committees, in addition to the Planning Commission, to finalize the following:

1. Specific streetscape projects consistent with the Robert Street *Redevelopment Design Framework*.
2. An improved "gateway" into the City from the north consistent with the B-5 Gateway North Zoning District.
3. Appropriate development for vacant and underutilized lands and buildings.
4. Traffic and safety improvements which may include changes in street designs and access.
5. Improved connections between Robert Street and surrounding neighborhoods through signage, sidewalks, pathways, and other improvements.
6. Appropriate funding mechanisms for new public expenditures in this area.

The end result of the Robert Street redesign should reflect the functional characteristics of the roadway and meet the needs of the surrounding neighborhoods. Robert Street is seen more and more as Main Street and less as a thoroughfare. The pedestrian improvements along Robert Street will enhance this image as well as create an increased need to provide more access to shoppers and residents. Complicating the redevelopment decision making process is the street's status as a potential turn-back candidate by Mn/DOT to Dakota County. This future ownership question blurs the approval/financing options for the South Robert Street Plan.

Collector Streets

The collector system is to be deployed nearly entirely within sub-regions to provide mobility between communities and neighborhoods. The collector system provides as much for land access as it does for vehicle mobility. The collector system also provides a "collection and distribution" system for the trips coming from or going to the metropolitan highway

system. That is, the collector system provides access to commercial, industrial, and high density residential development, while the metropolitan highway system is more oriented toward line-haul or the "non stop" portion of trips. Collectors are spaced between principal and minor arterials usually from one-quarter mile to one mile apart. Collectors are usually two or four lane streets with four way stop signs and traffic signals at intersections with other collectors and minor arterials. Collectors should not normally provide access to principal arterials.

The collector street system consists of county roads, municipal state aid streets and municipal streets. Roadways with significant continuity or traffic volumes have been classed as Principal Collectors. Others are classified as Minor Collectors. Some streets may be two different classifications depending on the location. The following list reflects the higher street classification areas. Refer to the attached Traffic Counts Map for locations as they relate to the classifications. Please note, there are some inconsistencies with the attached Traffic Counts Map and Met Council's approved TAC-TAB Map. The City must formally request some of the listed Collector streets below to be included in the TAC-TAB Map. The City is in the process of rectifying these inconsistencies.

| | | |
|---------------|---------|------------------|
| Annapolis | | Collector |
| Butler | CR 4 | Collector |
| Bernard | | Collector |
| Charlton | | Collector |
| Delaware | CSAH 63 | Collector |
| Dodd | TH149 | B Minor Arterial |
| Emerson | | Collector |
| Livingston | | Collector |
| Marie | | Collector |
| Mendota Road | CSAH 14 | Collector |
| Moreland | | Collector |
| Oakdale | CSAH 73 | Collector |
| Robert St | TH 3 | A Minor Arterial |
| Smith | TH149 | B Minor Arterial |
| Stryker | | Collector |
| Thompson | CR 6 | B Minor Arterial |
| Wentworth Ave | CSAH 8 | B Minor Arterial |

Local Streets

The local street system is deployed continuously through all developed areas to provide for local circulation and direct land access. The local street system is deployed within the grid of streets created by the collector and minor arterial system and comprises the largest percentage of total street mileage.

MSA System

The Municipal State Aid (MSA) program has a direct impact upon the city's system of Minor Arterials and Collector streets. The city obtains funds from the State of Minnesota taxing program to assist in the development and construction of a network of streets necessary to accommodate the heavier demand roadways. These monies are spent by the city based on rules and regulations establishing that program. The roadways designated by the city as eligible for Municipal State Aid funds would provide capital to aid in construction of a network as indicated on the system. This program of state assistance for municipal streets has provided capabilities of producing a system of collector streets to adequately serve local community demands.

Turn-back Program

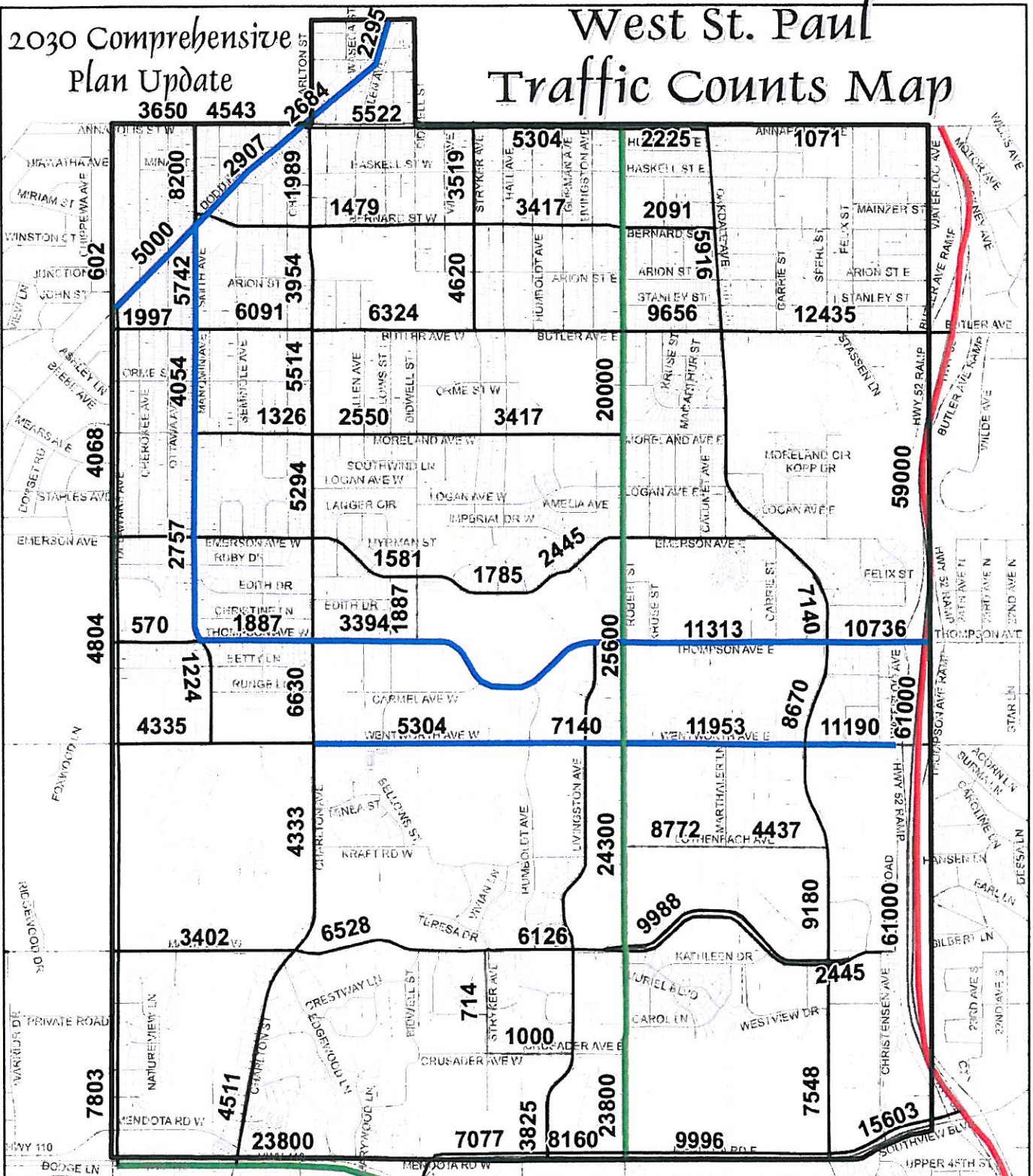
Actions by the State of Minnesota Department of Transportation and Dakota County Transportation Department will affect the City's roadway jurisdiction. The turn-back of Robert Street from the State to County jurisdiction has been in question for many years. As with any roadway turn-back, this future ownership question blurs the approval/financing options for planned improvements.

TABLE 20 - TRAFFIC VOLUMES
AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRAFFIC: 1996, 2030

| Street | Location | AADT Counts | |
|--------------|----------------------|-------------|--------|
| | | 2006 | 2030 |
| Annapolis | West of Robert | 5,304 | 7,200 |
| Butler | Robert to Oakdale | 9,656 | 12,000 |
| Butler | Oakdale to HWY 52 | 12,435 | 15,000 |
| Delaware | Wentworth to Emerson | 4,804 | 5,500 |
| Delaware | Marie to Wentworth | 7,803 | 9,000 |
| Mendota Road | East of Robert | 9,996 | 12,000 |
| Mendota Road | West of Robert | 7,077 | 10,000 |
| Wentworth | East of Robert | 11,953 | 13,000 |
| Wentworth | West of Robert | 7,140 | 9,000 |
| Oakdale | Marie to Wentworth | 9,180 | 11,000 |
| Oakdale | Wentworth -Thompson | 8,670 | 10,000 |
| Robert | North of Wentworth | 25,600 | 29,000 |
| Robert | South of Wentworth | 24,300 | 31,500 |

2030 Comprehensive Plan Update

West St. Paul Traffic Counts Map



LEGEND

0000 2006 AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC COUNT

— PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL

— A MINOR ARTERIAL

— B MINOR ARTERIAL

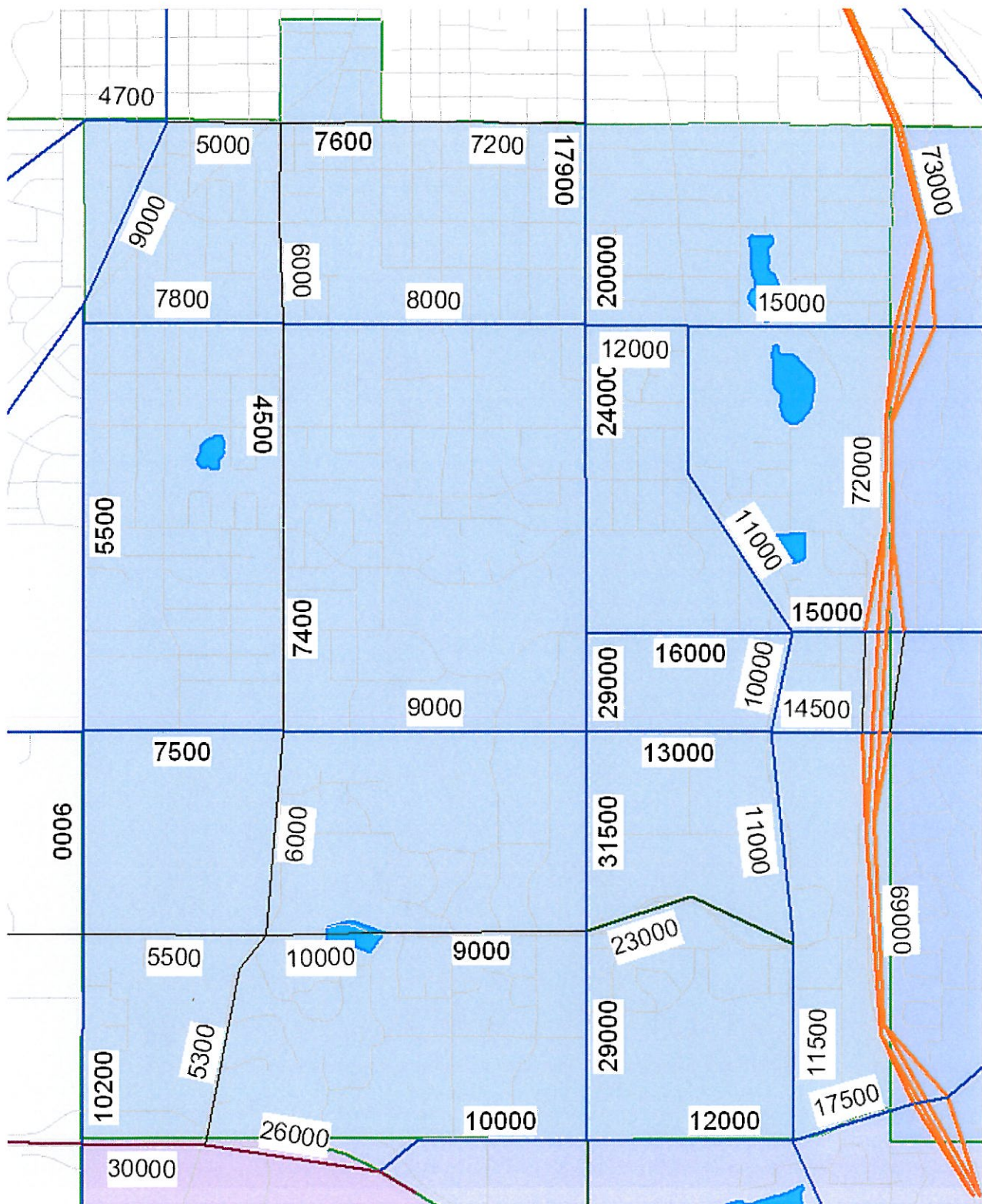
— COLLECTOR STREET

— LOCAL STREET

Source: Minnesota Dept. of Transportation

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Metropolitan Council 2030 Traffic Projections



TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM AND FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

| CHARACTERISTICS | COLLECTORS | B MINOR ARTERIAL | A MINOR ARTERIAL | PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL (Freeway) |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| FACILITIES (Existing and Proposed) | Annapolis Bernard Butler Charlton Delaware Emerson Livingston Marie Mendota Rd Oakdale Thompson | Dodd Rd Wentworth Smith | TH 110 Robert St. | I-494 TH 52 |
| TRIP FOCUS | Intracity and interneighborhood intercounty | Intracounty and intercity/ township | Intracounty, interstate | Intrastate and |
| GENERAL DESIGN AND FUNCTION | Usually provides 1 lane of traffic in each direction. Provides access to and from neighborhoods and the local street system. | Provides 1 or more lanes of traffic in each direction channelization for left and or right turn lane provided at intersections with other arterials interchanges when intersects with freeways. Accesses highly controlled. Serves relatively long trips at moderate speeds with focus on the regional or city trips | Provides 1 or 2 lanes of traffic in each direction with controlled intersections where it intersects with expressways, other thoroughfares, or collectors. Serves long trips within the city and provides access to and from other major roads. | Provides 1 or 2 continuous free flowing traffic lanes in each direction signals or with grade separation for intersections extending through the facility. Access is controlled. Serves the longest trips at a high speed. |
| DESIGN SPEED | 30-35 mph | 35-45 mph | 30-45 mph | 55-65 mph |
| TYPE OF TRIP | Varies - includes short and intermediate trips within the City long trips. | Accommodates intermediate to city. | Accommodates trips within the high speeds. | Accommodates long trips at |
| TRIP LENGTH | Usually less than 1 miles. 2 miles. miles. | Usually more than than 10 miles. | More than 4 | Usually more |
| ACCESS TO LAND | Usually full. | Usually limited. | Limited | None. |
| PARKING | Usually allowed. | usually allowed. Limited | None or Very | None. |
| SPACING | -1 mile -2 miles | 1-3 miles | 3-6 miles | |
| MAXIMUM GRADE | 6 4 | 4 | 4 | |
| VEHICLES PER DAY OR TRIPS | 1,000 - 3,000 | 4,000 or more | 5,000 or more or more | Up to 25,000 |

8.2 Traffic Assignment Zone (TAZ) Forecasts

Metropolitan Council has made population, employment and household projections to 2030 for West Saint Paul and has distributed them within eight Traffic Assignment Zones (TAZ's) within the City. Upon evaluation of Metro Council's projections, the City of West Saint Paul has adopted the projections for planning purposes. Given the fact that the City is fully developed, modest increases in households, population and employment are anticipated as redevelopment occurs at higher densities. A map of the six Traffic Assignment Zones is shown below followed by projections for each zone.

TABLE 21 - TAZ FORECAST

| Number of Households | | | | |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| TAZ | 2000 | 2010 | 2020 | 2030 |
| 291 | 1036 | 1101 | 1114 | 1150 |
| 292 | 741 | 773 | 797 | 823 |
| 293 | 1437 | 1499 | 1546 | 1596 |
| 294 | 1007 | 1047 | 1083 | 1118 |
| 295 | 2805 | 2900 | 3018 | 3115 |
| 296 | 1619 | 1680 | 1742 | 1798 |
| | | | | |
| Total | 8645 | 9000 | 9300 | 9600 |

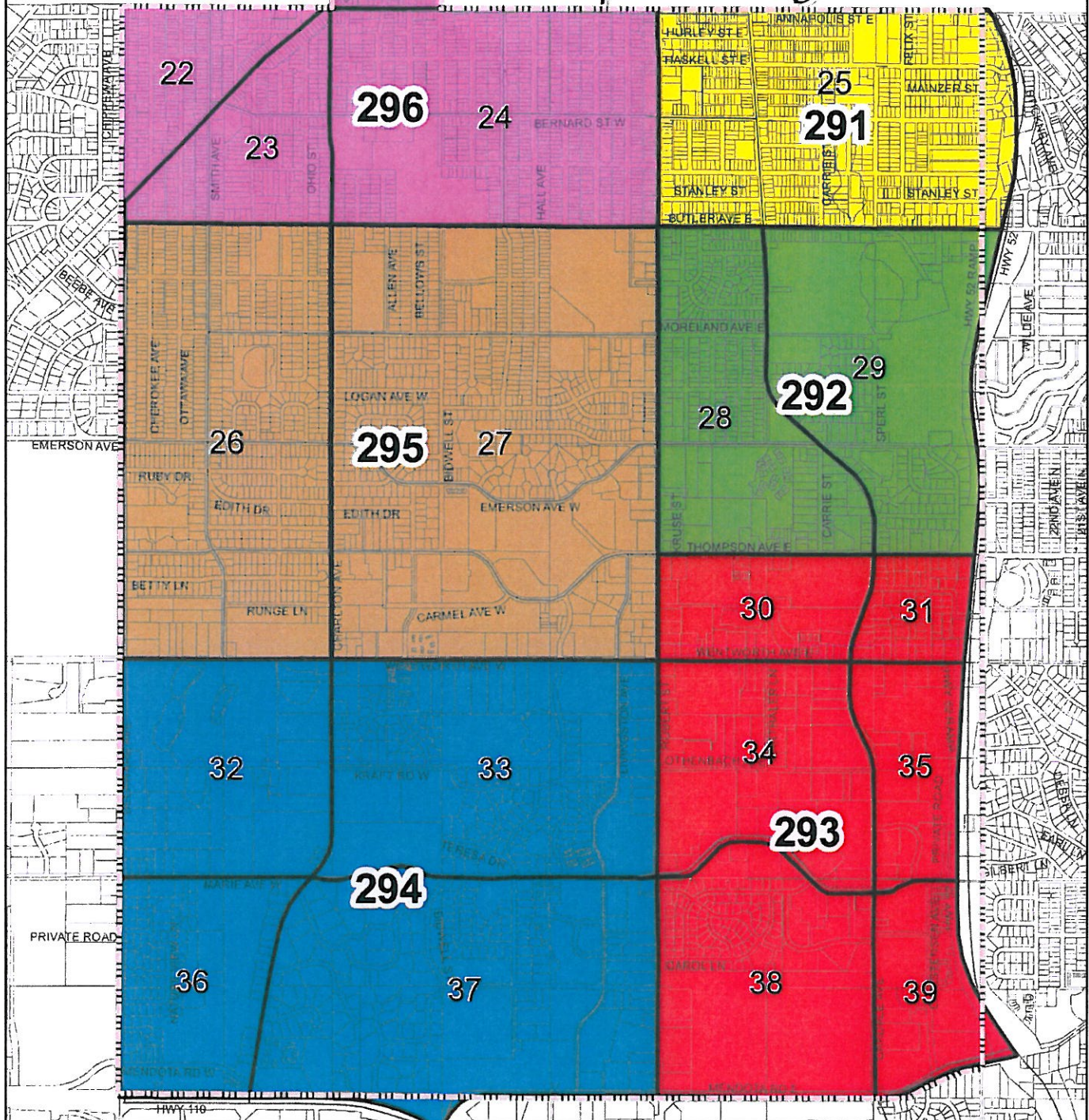
| Population | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| TAZ | 2000 | 2010 | 2020 | 2030 |
| 291 | 2475 | 2564 | 2691 | 2768 |
| 292 | 1831 | 1897 | 1991 | 2048 |
| 293 | 3031 | 3140 | 3296 | 3389 |
| 294 | 2217 | 2296 | 2411 | 2479 |
| 295 | 5878 | 6088 | 6391 | 6573 |
| 296 | 3973 | 4115 | 4320 | 4443 |
| | | | | |
| Total | 19405 | 20100 | 21100 | 21700 |

| Employment | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| TAZ | 2000 | 2010 | 2020 | 2030 |
| 291 | 140 | 170 | 190 | 210 |
| 292 | 455 | 550 | 620 | 670 |
| 293 | 3000 | 3570 | 4000 | 4340 |
| 294 | 2075 | 2510 | 3000 | 3150 |
| 295 | 2500 | 3020 | 3200 | 3560 |
| 296 | 735 | 880 | 990 | 1070 |
| | | | | |
| Total | 8905 | 10700 | 12000 | 13000 |

| Retail Employment | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| TAZ | 2000 | 2010 | 2020 | 2030 |
| 291 | 41 | 50 | 55 | 60 |
| 292 | 103 | 120 | 140 | 150 |
| 293 | 1003 | 1200 | 1330 | 1470 |
| 294 | 766 | 920 | 1020 | 1120 |
| 295 | 830 | 995 | 1105 | 1215 |
| 296 | 261 | 315 | 350 | 385 |
| | | | | |
| Total | 3004 | 3600 | 4000 | 4400 |

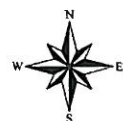
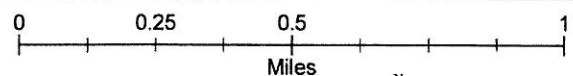
| Non-Retail Employment | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| TAZ | 2000 | 2010 | 2020 | 2030 |
| 291 | 99 | 120 | 135 | 150 |
| 292 | 352 | 430 | 480 | 520 |
| 293 | 1997 | 2370 | 2670 | 2870 |
| 294 | 1309 | 1590 | 1980 | 2030 |
| 295 | 1670 | 2025 | 2095 | 2345 |
| 296 | 474 | 565 | 640 | 685 |
| | | | | |
| Total | 5901 | 7100 | 8000 | 8600 |

West St. Paul Traffic Analysis Zones



LEGEND

- 00 DAKOTA COUNTY TAZ
- 00 METRO COUNCIL TAZ



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8.3 Access Control and Frontage Development

The importance of limiting access and controlling frontage development along thoroughfares designated to carry through traffic cannot be over-emphasized. The comprehensive planning process allows the ultimate level of transportation services which will be required within an urban area to be estimated with relative accuracy. A transportation system designed to fulfill ultimate needs can avoid the problems of shortsighted planning.

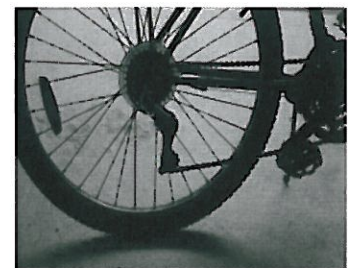
In general, access control along the thoroughfares has not been practiced until recent years. One of the primary functional problems of Robert Street is that commercial development was allowed to occur in strip fashion with direct driveway access to Robert Street in the past. Vehicles moving in and out of these driveways conflict directly with through traffic movement. Similarly, residential development along much of Oakdale, Charlton, Butler and Wentworth has resulted in numerous private driveways on these thoroughfares. The conflict between local access and through traffic reduces the effectiveness of these facilities to perform their primary function - that of moving traffic within and through the City. The conflict is particularly severe along Butler east of Robert Street where the roadway serves as a feeder route to an interchange with the Lafayette Freeway. Since the City is fully developed, it is difficult and, in many cases, not practical to eliminate existing access points due to the layout of the existing properties. Better access management will be a high priority for potential improvements to Robert Street including right in/right out, combining access points where feasible, and a center landscaped median.



8.4 Bicycle/Pedestrian

In the upcoming years, bicycle/pedestrian improvements will be a major focus for the City. With the assistance of the Active Living Dakota County Partnership, the City plans to conduct a pedestrian/bike gap analysis. Funding may be available to the City thru the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) and the Active Living Dakota County Initiative to complete the analysis. Once completed, the City will utilize the information for future projects.

In terms of existing connectivity to adjacent communities, T.H. 52 presents a significant barrier for bicyclists/pedestrians to South Saint Paul. The bridges across T.H. 52 at Butler, Thompson Wentworth and Mendota Road provide a sidewalk crossing. Additionally, a pedestrian bridge over T.H. 52 is located at Haskell Street as well as the more recent construction of a bicycle/pedestrian bridge (Dakota County North Urban Regional Trail) over T.H. 52 connecting Thompson Park in West Saint Paul and Kaposia Park in South Saint Paul.



As mentioned in Section 7.2, Dakota County has identified the preferred route and connections for the North Urban Regional Trail. The Trail is intended to provide a year-round, multi-purpose, non-motorized, off-road trail connection across northern Dakota County. The proposed east/west route is from Lilydale Regional Park to the Mississippi River Corridor in South Saint Paul through the middle part of West Saint Paul. The Trail is intended to connect residential areas with parks, schools, libraries, government offices, recreational facilities and commercial areas.

The preferred route begins in Lilydale and through Mendota Heights entering West St Paul along TH 110 at Delaware. It follows Mendota Road to Charlton Ave, north thru Dodge Nature Center to Marie at the four way stop, and traverse through the existing trails in Garlough and Marthaler Parks to Wentworth Avenue. It then connects to the County bikeway on the north side of Wentworth and along Oakdale Avenue, through Thompson County Park. The trail then utilizes the existing pedestrian bridge over TH 52 to Kaposia Park in South Saint Paul.



In addition, the City of West Saint Paul is in the process of requesting federal money for Robert Street improvements. In accordance with the approved Renaissance Plan, a major component of the potential project would include bicycle/pedestrian improvements along the corridor. The City will work closely with Mn/DOT and Dakota County to plan for all modes of transportation along the corridor.



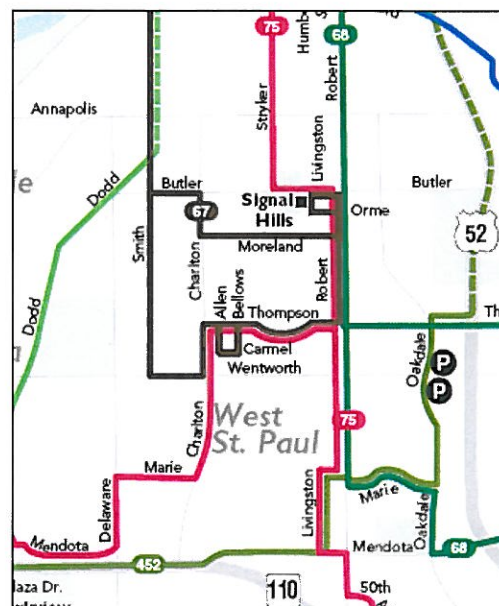
8.5 Transit

The City of West Saint Paul is within the Metropolitan Transit Taxing District and is located in Market Area II. Metro Transit provides bus service to West Saint Paul. Currently, five regular routes are operated within the City:

- #75 Stryker
- #67 Smith, S. Robert and Minnehaha
- #68 Jackson and S. Robert
- #452 Dodd Road/Oakdale/Butler and Downtown Minneapolis
- #417 Dodd Road and Downtown Saint Paul

The routes focus on Downtown Saint Paul but also connect West St. Paul to South St. Paul (#68 and #452), to Inver Grove Heights (#75), and to Mendota Heights (#75 and #452). Essentially all residents of West Saint Paul are within three blocks of a bus line. Three blocks is generally considered an acceptable walking distance for transit service.

There are two "park and ride" lots in West Saint Paul located at the West Saint Paul Sports Complex and Faith United Methodist Church. These facilities are served by Routes 68 and 452. In addition, DARTS and Metro Mobility are available



for residents.

West Saint Paul is well served by bus service and no significant changes are anticipated or proposed. TH 52 along the east edge of West Saint Paul is designated for preferential bus treatment. The City of West Saint Paul will continue to work with Metro Transit and MNDOT to provide quality transit services to the residents of West Saint Paul.

Currently there are no existing fixed transit facilities in West Saint Paul. There have been preliminary discussions regarding a potential for light rail or bus rapid transit either down Highway 52 or Robert Street. The recently adopted Metropolitan Council 2030 Transportation Policy Plan proposes that Robert Street be studied for its potential for arterial Bus Rapid Transit. In addition, Dakota County and the Robert Street Corridor Transit Feasibility Study is currently analyzing these concepts. The City should continue to be involved with these transit discussions as there will be profound impacts and opportunities, how, where and when the concept comes to fruition.



Picture courtesy of Metro Transit

8.6 Airports

There are no airports, proposed airport sites, search areas or other related facilities located in West Saint Paul. The Saint Paul Downtown Airport is located in Saint Paul less than one mile to the northeast of West Saint Paul. This airport is owned and operated by the Metropolitan Airports Commission. Its approach zones are not included within West Saint Paul; however, the northeast part of the City including Signal Hills Shopping Center is within an area within which the height of buildings is regulated by the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Aeronautics Division. Specific regulations are contained in Minnesota Administrative Rules, Chapter 8800.



The City of West Saint Paul is subject to two regulations of the Minnesota Administrative Rules. Rules, Chapter 8811 lists various criteria for determining obstruction to air navigation in 8811 concerning "Notification" and 8812 Subparagraph 4 "General Obstructions" relates to the entire City of West Saint Paul. Generally, if any structure greater than 200 feet in height, or greater than 200 feet above the airport elevation is proposed, the sponsor is required to notify the FAA and Commissioner of MnDOT at least 30 days in advance. The West Saint Paul Zoning Ordinance should be amended to make reference to Minnesota Rules, Chapter 8800.

Minnesota Administrative Rule Chapter, 8800.2400 establishes airport zoning standards for three Land Use Safety Zones. The northeast part of the City is located in Safety Zone C. Regulations pertaining to this zone are primarily concerned with potential radio or electronic interference with airport facilities or between airport and aircraft, and with lighting and other visual hazards to landing, take off or maneuvering of aircraft.

The City of West Saint Paul is participating in the Joint Zoning Board (Metropolitan Airport Commission and Minnesota Department of Transportation) for the Saint Paul Downtown Airport. Resolution No. 81-77 of the West Saint Paul City Council officially recognizes the need for adopting zoning regulations for the Airport Hazard Area, and supports the findings of the Saint Paul Planning Commission relative to land use safety zoning within such Hazard Area.

The aircraft noise zones for the South Saint. Paul Municipal Airport and the Saint Paul Downtown Airport do not extend into the City.

8.7 Heliports

There are no identified heliport sites within the West Saint Paul City limits. The City's proximity to the Saint Paul downtown airport precludes any duplication of service.